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### Reading Walk the Walk

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# ▶ Reading Walk the Walk

an evaluation of the Scottish Book Trust's graphic novel project

Prepared for **the Scottish Book Trust**

by

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## Executive Summary

*Walk the Walk* is a graphic novel with associated activities and support resources produced by Scottish Book Trust (SBT) in 2014. In developing *Walk the Walk*, SBT used a similar method to that used in two previous graphic novel projects: *Skint* (2011) and *John Muir, Earth: Planet, Universe* (2014). The key principles in this method are to facilitate collaborative work between professional authors/illustrators and members of the community of readers who will be using the book; to work iteratively; to produce work that is inclusive and accessible; and to provide CPD and/or teaching resources. For *Walk the Walk*, SBT worked with six adult literacy groups in developing the graphic novel and a further five to pilot the initial draft.

The main objective of our evaluation was to explore the impact of participating in this process on the tutors and learners involved. To do this, we conducted focus groups and interviews with some of the people involved and analysed the documents SBT produced throughout the development process. We also collected some limited data from tutors who were not involved in the development of the book and from Google Analytics.

Scottish Book Trust hoped that as a result of being involved in the creation of the resource, and/or as a result of using it in their literacy groups, adult literacy learners would:

- develop their self-confidence and improve their communication skills, especially in participatory or group discussion settings
- increase their understanding of sectarianism and their recognition of the perspectives of others
- improve their reading ability, leading to greater engagement with books

We, therefore, focused our evaluation on these specific outcomes.

## Findings

Overall, the evaluation found evidence that the SBT book development process met its aims. It impacted positively on learners' self-confidence in participating in group discussion and in reading. In some cases this even translated into greater confidence in discussing

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sectarianism outside of the group and in challenging other people's language use and behaviours. An important contributor to these observed impacts was being involved in something with a real-world impact. The SBT consultation process was experienced as giving voice to people who were unused to being listened to.

The activities used in the development sessions enabled and supported learners to recognise that others have different perspectives and to reflect upon links between their own perspectives, experiences and opinions and those of other people in the group and of the characters in the story. Reading the book out loud and providing feedback on drafts of the book were particularly valued activities that seemed to have the greatest potential to impact positively on learners. Learners enjoyed reading the script together and enjoyed developing characters and being engaged in a creative process. These activities were associated with a deepening recognition of others' perspectives. This was the case for tutors as much as for learners. In particular, some younger participants felt that working with this project gave them insight into the experiences of older generations. Also, reading out loud proved to be an engaging way to get learners to interact with a book and did help learners in developing their reading ability.

Initial understandings of sectarianism were mixed both between and within groups. The SBT process emphasised learning through sharing and learners and tutors who knew more about the subject shared their knowledge in their groups. Learners reported that the group discussions had increased their knowledge and understanding around sectarianism.

Some tutors also reported increasing their understanding of sectarianism and confidence in leading work on the topic. Tutors were often from different demographic groups from their learners, and one of the things they valued most from the process was developing a better understanding of their learners' experiences and perspectives in relation to sectarianism.

Sectarianism is a topic that sparks strong emotions and opinions in most people. While tutors might be cautious about using highly emotive topics in literacy groups, we found that strong feelings led to a great deal of energetic engagement in discussion. In the groups we consulted, the emotions were managed well by the facilitators and by the groups themselves.

Finally, in looking at the book itself and its use post-development, we identified several

aspects that were key to engaging readers and helping them to develop their communication and literacy skills:

- The book's script format and the practice of reading it in a group, out
- Providing illustrations
- An interesting story that is "realistic" and has relatable characters and setting
- Use of vernacular language and humour

It seems that the graphic novel format and the storytelling dimension with identifiable characters caught people's interest. It suggests that difficult subjects can be presented to learners through narrative and visual means. Groups were unanimous in reporting that they enjoyed taking on a role and reading it out loud. Tutors felt that reading a character's words encouraged learners' participation at a deeper level than reading simple prose.

#### Further Thoughts

After conducting this piece of evaluation research, we found some interesting links between what *Walk the Walk* seems to achieve and the wider literature on literacy. Psychologist and literacy advocate Maryanne Wolf proposes that the biggest gift that fluent reading gives to a reader is the gift of time between the decoding of letters and the speed at which the eyes cross the page. It is this gap of time in which a fluent reader's brain is able to bring the text into relationship with their own knowledge and experience and conversely to enter into the consciousness of another. The process of doing a shared reading of a scripted book provides a similar opportunity for less proficient readers. By taking turns reading, the literacy learners have pauses in which to reflect on what they have read and what they are listening to in relation to their own lives and experiences.

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## Introduction

### Overview of SBT Project

*Walk the Walk* is a graphic novel with associated activities and support resources produced by Scottish Book Trust (SBT) in 2014 with funds from the Scottish Government's Voluntary Action Fund Tackling Sectarianism programme. This government fund supported a number of community initiatives (44 in total) that aimed to increase understanding of inter-Christian sectarianism in Scotland and to address it in some way.

In developing *Walk the Walk*, SBT used a similar method to that used in two previous graphic novel projects: *Skint* (2011, which aimed to develop money literacy) and *John Muir, Earth: Planet, Universe* (2014, which aimed to develop environmental values). The key principles in this development method are to facilitate collaborative work between professional authors/illustrators and members of the demographic group who will be using the book; to work iteratively; to produce work that is inclusive and accessible; and to provide CPD and/or teaching resources. In practice this means involving groups belonging to the demographic the project seeks to reach from early stages in the project; working with these groups to identify issues and narratives related to the central theme of the project; and then bringing initial drafts of the book back to these development groups in order to get their feedback. This feedback then informs the final book.

Approximately one quarter of the adult Scottish population may have some literacy difficulties. One in 28 adults in Scotland face serious literacy challenges. Poverty is one of the strongest factors in literacy difficulties, with people living in the 15% most deprived areas of Scotland more likely to have lower levels of literacy capabilities (Scottish Survey of Adult Literacies, 2009). It was this population of Scottish adult literacy learners that SBT set out to work with through *Walk the Walk*.

SBT's overall aims with this project were "To develop a narrative resource with adult literacy learners for adult literacy learners to support the development of their understanding of sectarianism and its impact, and where appropriate, effect attitudinal change, as well as

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developing literacy skills."

Scottish Book Trust hopes that as a result of being involved in the creation of the resource, and/or as a result of using it in their literacy groups, learners will:

- develop their self-confidence and improve their communication skills, especially in participatory or group discussion settings
- increase their understanding of sectarianism and their recognition of the perspectives of others
- improve their reading ability, leading to greater engagement with books

Scottish Book Trust hopes that for tutors, the resource will provide a greater understanding of sectarianism, and inspire the confidence to deliver sessions around this and other challenging and emotive subjects.

### Development of Walk the Walk

For *Walk the Walk*, SBT worked with 6 adult literacy groups in developing the graphic novel and a further 5 to pilot the initial draft. After initial sessions with the development groups, in which learners' understanding of and experiences with sectarianism were explored, collected information and anecdotes were shared with the author and illustrator. Thirty-two learners, 6 tutors and 8 support-workers across 5 groups participated in these initial sessions. The author and illustrator then went away and produced early drafts of the script and of the character illustrations. These drafts were then shared with the groups by the author and illustrator in order to obtain feedback from learners. Forty-one learners, 6 tutors and 5 support workers across 6 groups attended these workshops (note, at two workshops only one of the author or illustrator was able to attend).

A third workshop was held in which learners participated in reading out excerpts from the draft book and provided further feedback to SBT staff. Thirty-seven learners, 5 tutors and 8 support workers across 6 groups attended the third session. It should be noted that membership in most literacy groups tends to be quite fluid, therefore participants in sessions 2 and 3 may not have

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been present in earlier sessions and some people who participated in the earlier session were not involved in the later sessions.

Four pilot groups (which SBT labeled "Control Groups") were held with what was hoped to be the final version of the book. These groups had not been involved in the development of the book. In the sessions held with the pilot groups, sections of the book were read out and some of the support activities were trialled. These sessions involved 38 learners and 6 tutors across 4 groups, predominantly in Glasgow. Based on feedback from these four groups, the graphic novel was redrafted and finalised.

Development of support activities and materials was ongoing with the development of the book and a fifth pilot group trialled some of the activities after reading the book.

The book was printed and in November 2014, 3000 copies were distributed to 180 groups across Scotland. These were primarily, although not exclusively, adult literacy groups. Most of the books were distributed directly to the groups who were using them via a distribution warehouse. Some tutors received multiple boxes and cascaded them to local groups. SBT distributed some sets of books directly to smaller rural groups. The book is also available to download on the SBT website. Sessions to train tutors in using the book were held in January and July 2015. Further training sessions are planned throughout 2015.


## The Evaluation

SBT has already provided its own evaluation of the early and mid-term impacts of the book in their final report to the funding organisations: the Voluntary Action Fund and the Scottish Government. Their report draws on their experiences and records of the development groups, the CPD training that they gave to literacy tutors, feed-back video sessions they ran with some of the original participants and is very positive in its evaluation.

Our evaluation has been conducted from a third party position, enabling us to be impartial in our conclusions. Moreover, we take the research material in a different direction. While we too evaluate the impact on people participating in developing the graphic novel, we

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also seek to deepen understandings of the ways in which reading and discussing such graphic novels brings about these impacts. In this way, our evaluation contributes to SBT's objectives to increase their understanding of the extent to which communities are prepared to engage in open and frank discussion on sectarianism and to gain robust evidence of the impact of the narrative resource and methodology on learners' understanding of sectarianism and its impact on individuals/communities. Our evaluation also aims to inform future projects of this type.



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## Methods

### Overview

This piece of research primarily explored the experiences of the literacy learning groups that participated in the development of the Tackling Sectarianism book, looking in particular for any evidence for changes at the group level in literacy, knowledge, empathy and problem-solving related to sectarianism. This evaluation focused on the group level, because the book is primarily aimed at use in groups and because membership in adult literacy learning groups shifts over time.

Evaluation research with selected development groups involved the following:

1. A "vote with your feet" activity for each group was added to the beginning of the first development workshop. This is an action sociometry method for quickly surveying knowledge, attitudes and feelings in groups, in this case in relation to sectarianism.
2. Semi-structured Interviews were held with some literacy group tutors at the end of the project
3. Focus groups were held with tutors and learners after their work with the book was finished.
4. We also analysed the materials collected by SBT for the creation and refinement of the book, including notes taken during workshop activities and discussions, transcripts of recorded discussions, and supporting material generated during the workshops. Using these materials provided insight into the topics and sorts of stories discussed at each of these workshops as well as into group process.

Evaluation research with Literacy Groups Using the Graphic Novel, but not participating in its development involved the following:

1. A reading session was held with one of the pilot groups and the discussion following
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was recorded for analysis.

2. A "before" survey was created on Survey Monkey and a link to it was sent to all literacy leaders receiving copies of the book to gain a benchmark of their knowledge and confidence around teaching on sectarianism. They were asked to fill in the survey prior to using the book.
3. An "after" survey was later sent out to the same group of literacy leaders asking them about their experience using the book.

### Research with Development Groups

#### Vote with Your Feet

We captured baseline measurements of the groups' understanding of and attitudes towards aspects of sectarian behaviour through an action sociometry method we have called "vote with your feet". In this exercise, participants were asked to line themselves up across the room, choosing where to stand based on how they related to the following questions:

1. How confident do you feel in knowing what "sectarianism" is?
2. How much did sectarianism impact upon your community in the past, do you think?
3. How much does sectarianism impact upon your community today?
4. How much does sectarianism impact your own life?

They were then asked to give a word or a phrase to explain why they were standing where they were standing. Their position and words were written down by a scribe.

Additional quick votes were conducted (i.e. no word or phrase was asked for) for some of these additional questions:

1. How common is it for friends to make sectarian jokes with each other in private?
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2. How common is it for people to describe other people with sectarian terms behind their backs?
3. How common is it for people to NOT get hired or promoted because of their religion?
4. How common is it to see sectarian language, jokes or threats on social media like Twitter, Facebook and Tumblr?
5. How common is sectarian graffiti?
6. How common are sectarian threats or verbal harassment in your community?
7. How common is sectarian violence?

It was our intention to do a follow-up series of "vote with your feet" questions with groups after they had finished working with the Scottish Book Trust. However, in scheduling interviews with the groups, it became apparent that the fluid nature of adult literacy groups in Scotland meant that there were few if any of the original participants still involved nine months later. Moreover, some of our follow-up focus groups were mostly comprised of literacy leaders and support workers, with few participants present.

#### Interviews with Tutors and Participants

The evaluation team conducted:

- five group interviews with groups that had been involved in the initial development of the graphic novel
- One phone interview with the tutor of the sixth group involved in the initial development
- Attended the use of the book with one group, whose tutor and one participant had been involved in piloting a book draft
- Attended the final event of a sectarianism project at another pilot group

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Data from the Development Workshops

We had access to various documents compiled by Scottish Book Trust employees during the development of the graphic novel. These documents included:

- Transcripts from 6 sessions:
  - 3 groups from session 1
  - 1 group from session 2
  - 1 group from sessions 1 and 3
- Notes from 15 sessions:
  - 1 group from session 1 only
  - 1 group from sessions 1 and 2
  - 4 groups from sessions 1, 2 and 3
- 2 SBT video interviews with Learner Groups conducted in November 2014
- Collected feedback from one pilot group
- BBC Scotland interview

In total, we analysed over 100 documents in performing our evaluation. In order to manage the large amount of qualitative data, we used a computer assisted qualitative data analysis software called Atlas.ti. Using this software, we carefully read and analysed every sentence, coding it for various themes, paying particular attention to SBT's desired outcomes. These thematic codings were then carefully compared across documents, allowing us to build a picture of the impact of developing this book on participants.

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Survey

Literacy tutors participating in CPD training were asked to fill out an initial survey to assess baseline knowledge of and confidence with the subject of sectarianism. A follow-up survey was held over the summer of 2015 with people and organisations that had received class copies of the book. The request to participate was sent to 110 organisations. Smaller sets of books were additionally distributed to other organisations funded by Action on Sectarianism

Scotland, Steering Group Members and Learning Center managers, these groups were not included in our survey as we were interested only in the experiences of those who were in a position to use it with literacy learners.

Thirty-four people responded to our follow-up survey. Of these, 26 completed the survey, while 9 answered only some of the questions. We have included the findings from this survey as it does provide some additional information. However, because of the limited responses, it cannot be generalised to the experiences of literacy tutors across Scotland as a whole, nor can it be used to measure the extent of usage of *Walk the Walk*.

We also had intended to do a comparison between the before and after surveys of individual tutors. Unfortunately, we were only able to match 2 of the initial surveys to post-surveys, which did not provide us with enough data to use in the evaluation. Therefore, the surveys have only been treated separately.

### Google Analytics

We compiled Google Analytic statistics from January to July of 2015. The website was still in development during this time, with additions and changes being made, so we have confined our analysis to those pages that were available and reported on across all months. We compiled the numbers of total pageviews and unique pageviews (which counts only one pageview per visitor per visit). We also tracked which pages visitors entered the site on, as well as what was clicked on and/or downloaded.



## Findings

In this section, we share our findings in relation to SBT's desired outcomes. We considered three components to be foundational to the others and so begin our observations with them: self-confidence, recognition of others' perspectives and reflection (this latter is in addition to SBT's desired outcomes). All of these can be considered aspects of communication skills. We then look at the impact on literacy. While not specified by SBT as a desired outcome, we have also looked for evidence of any change in attitudes towards sectarianism or related behaviours. We then turn our attention to the impact on tutors in terms of their understanding of and confidence with the topic of sectarianism. This section draws from the development sessions and from the survey. We end by looking at how *Walk the Walk* is currently being used in literacy groups, at what survey respondents liked best, at potential barriers to use, at the use of support materials on the web and at what participants suggest for the future.

Note, for purposes of confidentiality, we have not used participants' real names, nor the names of their organisations.

### Outcome: Developing Literacy Learners' Self-Confidence

At least a few members of every group exhibited confidence in sharing opinions in discussions at the initial development sessions that SBT ran. This initial confidence is testament to the skills of their own literacy tutors in shaping group contexts conducive to learning. It may also be the case that it was groups with confident learners who agreed to participate in the development workshops.

Due to the changing membership of the groups between development sessions and the limitations in the data, it was not possible for us to trace changes in individuals from one workshop to another. However, we could assess the amount of discussion happening in each session and we do have feedback from tutors that speaks to this outcome.

There are three main findings with respect to this outcome. First, that participation in

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development itself seemed to positively impact on at least some participants. Second, that contributing to a project with a concrete outcome that aimed to have a significant reach within society impacted on individual self-confidence. Finally, simply participating in reading the book also helped increase learners' confidence. These are discussed below.

SBT-led development session activities seemed well suited to helping learners share opinions. In the sessions we have recordings or notes for, the "Mapping Sectarianism" exercise elicited a lot of opinions, as did the "Responsibility Ladder" in at least one group. One tutor spoke of a student gaining confidence through ongoing participation in the development sessions:

Jillian is so much more forthcoming since last time – like a different person. She basically led the session. At the first development session she said about 10 words total – now she is in a new group, she is the only one who was at the previous session so she was the one to tell the others what had been said. Seemed to love this role! Spoke the most of all the learners and volunteered to read twice! (and did!) — *Literacy tutor*

While the above tutor highlighted the impact of the first session, later session discussions of drafts of the book often proved to be some of the most engaging activities, as this tutor related:

...the second time it was Claire [SBT facilitator] with Jill and Gowan [artist and author] came along to just discuss the subject matter in a bit more detail, kind of speak their opinions, I think those sessions were - what it was about them was that they were structured and not too dry, and everyone felt that they could talk, and I think it just kind of settled well with them at that time because it was a group with a lot of people who weren't afraid to put forward their opinions and so on, and so I think they certainly enjoyed that consultation side of things.

Being asked to provide feedback on drafts of the book highlighted for learners the impact that sharing their opinion could have. This wider impact was an important part of what enabled some learners to gain confidence as this tutor explains:

The group had been quiet – at the start, they didn't feel they could control anything - so the fact that they were able to participate in the writing of a book and sort of shape it - 'I didn't like that bit', 'I liked that bit' – that was great for them -- because they come from a background of feeling like they didn't have any control over what happened around them... there was one student in particular you could really see him go from – "there's no much point me contributing anything cos nobody ever listens to me" – to him actually fully contributing cos he knew he was gonna be listened to, you know. It

was good. — *Literacy tutor*

The above quotation indicates the importance of being heard more broadly to a learner's self-confidence while highlighting the impact that multiple-deprivations on a social scale can have on an individual's confidence. The SBT consultation process gave voice to people who were unused to being listened to.

There is evidence that participating in a group reading of the book, whether in the third session of a development group or as part of an independent class, also had a positive impact on some participants' self-confidence. Participants were asked to take on one or several of the book's characters and read certain scenes with divided roles. In terms of process, sharing the burden of reading out loud with their peers appealed to many participants and seems to have encouraged some readers lacking in confidence to read out loud, as this tutor attests:

We had this one sixteen-year-old guy, very heavily dyslexic guy. They were fishing out parts and he chose one that had pretty much a page of reading in it. And he just wanted to do it. And so I was kind of with him, supporting him to do that, but he took that on and went with it all the way. And I had to prompt him every now and again, but you know, that was, I wouldn't have necessarily expected him to have grasped at that quite as fully as he did and I think that was kind of a stunning moment [...] I think that was maybe the highlight of the whole process actually, was him doing that and getting involved with it. He was very much the baby of the group. And certainly the most profoundly dyslexic of the group, and the hardest to engage. And that was... wow, that was very nice. — *Literacy tutor*

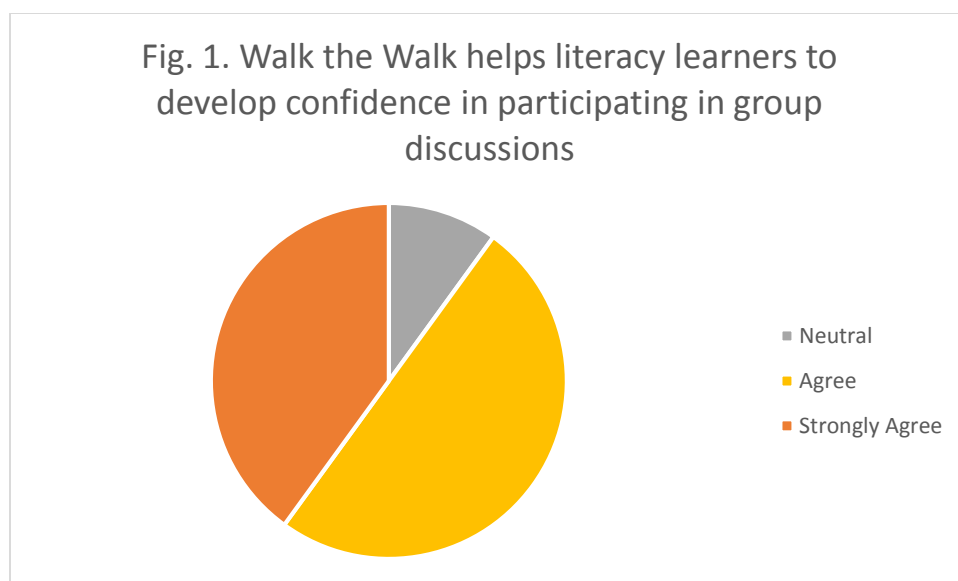
Being able to take on a different persona through reading a character's words in a script paradoxically enabled some people to find the confidence to share their own voice:

And it's one of the things that we discover is that we may have students who in class are very quiet and very shy, but if you do role play where you give them a different voice and a different character, they suddenly come out of their shell. -- And so there was quite a lot of that. I think maybe that kinda gave them the confidence to do more of that in class as well. — *Literacy tutor*

Finally, turning to the follow-up survey, of the 10 tutors who had used the book and answered the question, 9 agreed that *Walk the Walk* helped learners develop confidence in participating in group discussions, with only 1 person staying neutral. So the tutors believed

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the book and support materials themselves had a positive impact on confidence beyond the impacts on the development groups we observed above.



### Outcome: Increased Recognition of Others Perspectives

Besides being more confident in reading out loud and sharing their own opinions, in the development of communication skills it is important that learners also come to recognise that others may have different perspectives from their own. Two aspects of this were particularly important to this project. First, learners recognised different perspectives through the characters presented in various versions of *Walk the Walk*. Second, learners recognised that others in their group have different perspectives, opinions and experiences. Both involved empathy.

There are numerous examples in the data of participants empathising with the characters in the book and the conflicts they were faced with. One of the most common sources of evidence for this form of empathising came from discussions of the "What might happen next" exercise such as this one:

**Learner:** I think Rab and Anya probably move somewhere else in Scotland where

there's nae trouble and that, somewhere quiet they can settle down... Cos Anya's now in this position of saying she's gonna go to Poland...Cos obviously she's threatened Rab if she – if there's any more trouble, she'll go back to Poland, know what I mean...With the wean. She's got a wean, hasn't she? She'll go back to Poland, so obviously Rab's no wanting her.

*Facilitator:* So what does that mean for him?

*Learner:* That they've got – he's gotta move somewhere away fae the Walk...Obviously he doesnae want he doesnae want his girlfriend going to Poland. He just obviously wants her to stay here.

It is only through identifying with a character, thinking about their situation and attempting to see things from their perspective that participants can come up with future developments to the plot.

Several participants fed back that they enjoyed, and benefited from hearing other people's perspectives in group discussion. The interactions between Claire, the facilitator from SBT, and a learner highlight this aspect of participating in the development of the book:

*Learner:* I thought that it would be quite interesting to get involved with it [the SBT book] to get my opinions in, but also to get other people's opinions.'

*Claire:* Your tutor did tell me that some of you guys were a bit skeptical when you first heard about this project.

*Learner:* Yeah, I would agree with that one, yeah.

*Claire:* But then when you sort of got involved, what did you reckon, did that change at all?

*Learner:* It did in a way because it made me see things from a different perspective.

*Claire:* Am I right in thinking you're a Celtic fan?

*Learner:* Yes.

*Claire:* And you're in the room with someone who's a Hearts fan and someone who's a Rangers fan and so on. Do you want to tell us a bit about what that was like, discussing with people with different views?

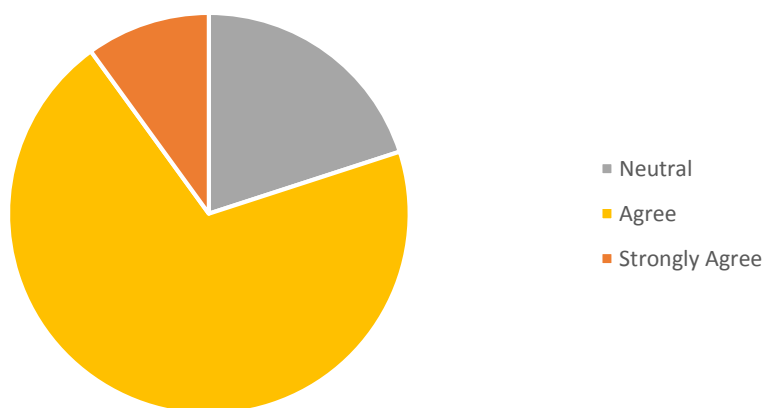
*Learner:* It was quite interesting because obviously, me being a Celtic fan and Celtic and Rangers haven't had the best relationship in the past. So it's quite interesting to hear what he had to say, and then the other guy being a Hearts fan it was quite good to see his point of view as an outsider you know? Because he's not one of the sets of fans, he's another set altogether so that's quite interesting.' - *Development Session 3*

As evidenced above, the exchange of opinions and points of view was an important and valued part of the experience for many participants.

Many younger participants reported not knowing much about sectarianism initially and/or that they thought it was irrelevant in Scottish society today. For many of these participants, hearing others' experiences and opinions, particularly those of older learners, was eye-opening. One learner reported that one of the things he enjoyed most about the sessions SBT ran was 'Seeing the perspective of others, sectarianism isn't something my 15 year old friends talk about on a day to day basis so, getting to understand others' points of view was quite refreshing.'

Finally, the 10 tutors who have used the book and completed the final survey felt that simply working with the book and support activities helped learners to recognise the perspective of others with 9 agreeing that it did and 1 staying neutral.

Fig. 2. Walk the Walk helps literacy learners to recognise the perspectives of others



## Reflection

While not specifically mentioned in SBT's desired outcomes, reflection is another fundamental communication skill, one which enables people to move from recognising others' perspectives to shifting in personal understanding and attitudes. By reflection, we mean the ability to take new information and relate it critically to one's own stories and experiences and in turn to make use of personal experiences to critically think about the stories and opinions one encounters. Reflection allows people to recognise where they differ from and where they connect with other people and to reappraise their own position through this process.

Many of the activities provided by SBT highlighted learners' opinions in relation to one another as a stimulus for ensuing discussion, as discussed in the previous section. These provided opportunities for reflection. SBT also included questions specifically designed to stimulate and facilitate transformational reflection as a support activity.

Finally, the group reading on its own seemed to supply opportunities for constructive reflection as this tutor illustrates:

I remember one of the students had got quite upset about how one of the characters was kind of being picked on quite a lot or other people were making decisions for them. And he became quite upset, saying that that was what happens to him. And so it was quite interesting to see how that then developed to where he could relate to it but not get upset with it.

In this way, characters could provide a "third position" from which learners could look at their own situation from a slight remove and a different angle.

The type of story told and the characterisation were important to learners' ability to relate it to their own experiences. In *Walk the Walk*, the story and characters were perceived to be realistic and close to life. This invited comparisons to participants' own experiences and circumstances, as in the following instance:

They began to really chat about [sectarianism] and there was a few of them had had really quite severe kind of bullying experiences and they began to kind of relate a lot of what was being discussed to their own experiences in life - we kind of encouraged that kind of reflective – but they began to really relate to some of the characters - and some

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of the things that had happened to them I think. - *Literacy tutor*

Outcome: Improve Communication Skills - Participation in Group Discussion

The topic of improved participation in group discussions has already been touched on in the above sections, with evidence that participation improved learner confidence in contributing to discussions, that it helped them to recognise others perspectives and provided opportunities to reflect on their own experiences and position.

Both the development sessions and the reading sessions provided a context for group discussions. There is evidence of learners in all groups exhibiting group discussion skills around turn taking, often facilitated by SBT staff. The topic of sectarianism appears to be one that is multifaceted and emotionally engaging enough to stimulate ongoing discussion. The support activities proved useful in opening up different aspects of the topic for discussion. These activities sometimes involved smaller group discussions, often with the assistance of a tutor, providing a place for less confident group speakers to share their opinions and experiences.

The open ending of the story invites further discussion and exploration of the topic, as became evident during the group sessions. In all groups, there were lively conversations about what might happen next and what particular characters should do (see the discussion of what Rab and Anya should do above, page 19). SBT include an activity at the back of the book, aimed at supporting and enabling this sort of discussion.

In several groups, the story became a springboard for discussions not only about sectarianism but about wider issues of discrimination, intolerance, bullying, identity and belonging, often within the context of an increasingly multicultural Scottish society. Some participants shared their own experiences around the issue. (See the quotations from Literacy Tutors in the section on Reflection above).

As is the case with any group work, group dynamics and the personalities of the individuals in the group had a big impact on the success of the sessions. However, as indicated in the discussion of confidence above, the process and book encouraged those who may have

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been less confident to share their opinions.

Outcome: Improve Communication Skills, Problem Solving

We also found evidence of the development of problem-solving skills in the group work undertaken. The initial SBT book development session tended to elicit first abstract facts and opinions ("separate schools affected your friendships, how many kids you had in your family, what your surname was, going for a job, what school you went to"), then generalised experiences ("You can go down a corridor and hear it. Especially if there's been a match on") and finally a few personal stories:

I moved school when I was 10 and only then I found out about Protestants and Catholics and that was because it was a Catholic school and a non-denomination school had a shared football pitch. So it was just battles regularly, you know — *Learner*

The use of fresh narrative resources in sessions 2 and 3, in this case drafts of the graphic novel, provided an opportunity for learners to engage in interpreting new information and forming new and altering already established opinions, which involves a different level of confidence and problem solving.

The following set of notes from one of the third sessions shows learners in discussion, developing and negotiating opinions in relation to the new narrative:

*Female Learner 1:* Gran caused the fight. She shouldn't have sung it in that company. Same as a Rangers fan singing 'Simply the Best' at Celtic fans.

*Male Learner 2:* Johnny caused the fight calling her an old cow.

*Female Learner 1:* drink is involved so that is partly to blame."

The activity of asking learners what they think various characters will do or should do next directly invites learners to engage not only in empathy and reflection but also in problem-solving. These learners demonstrate their ability to envisage many different solutions to the characters' problems and to negotiate with each other:

*Male learner 1:* Cos the two grans have actually taken it to heart this time and they both --

*Female learner 1:* I think the Irish influence in Glasgow makes the sectarian thing more than it does in other --

*Female learner 2:* Yeah but this could be anywhere.

*Facilitator:* So you said the grans were blaming themselves?

*Male learner 2:* So eventually – I don't know when but eventually I think they'll come together and see sense of what's the point in all this, what's the point in fighting and all that. Especially what happened to Weezy.

*Facilitator:* What do you think might need to happen for the families to -

*Male learner 3:* The two grannies have got to try and keep their families in line.

Through group reflection, problem-solving for the book's characters could come around to problem-solving for the learners themselves as this same group illustrates later in their discussion:

*Female learner 1:* Which is the main...as who are Catholic. Right? To forgive. This is one of the things that we have to do and it's hard for me to forgive. It's not an easy thing to do.

*Female learner 2:* I think it's the same with all religions. Forgiveness comes into it. It's no just one side. It's both sides.

*Female learner 3:* Well, it's on all sides, it's not just Catholic or Protestant.

In the above interactions learners demonstrate their ability to empathise with the characters, to share their opinions in a group, to reflect on their own lives in relation to the story, to problem solve and even to shift in their opinions.

Outcome: Improved Reading Ability

There is evidence that engaging in the development process and working with the reading out loud aspect of *Walk the Walk* did improve learners' engagement with and confidence in reading. Returning to the feedback from the tutor about her learner Jillian, quoted in the section on learner self-confidence above, we can see the surprise expressed that

her learner volunteered to read out loud twice in a new group following her work with SBT. An observed increase in confidence with reading out loud was echoed in another follow-up group interview, linked to the enjoyment of reading a character:

And I was there only near the end, so I only witnessed just one -- but I was absolutely heartened because they all started to want to read aloud and do funny voices and things and there was one – I can't remember his name, sorry, I'm not familiar with the group – but he said, 'oh, I love this class, I get to do silly voices' - *Literacy tutor*

The importance of having an engaging and enjoyable story was highlighted by this tutor, who was also quoted above in relation to the 16-year old dyslexic and self-confidence:

Learners were given little bits to read out, and you could kind of tell in the room, you know, I could tell you exactly who in that room was quite skeptical about the thing and who wasn't, and I could feel it, and I could feel that atmosphere change as they got into the story a little bit more when they were reading it out together...you could almost feel the temperature change. So there was just a feeling of involvement. Kind of like you get in the theatre, it really felt like that, when people are engrossed in something. So that was kind of fascinating.

Becoming engrossed in reading to one's self is recognized as a marker of reading proficiency and also as an experience that encourages people to read more. While not as demanding as reading on one's own, becoming engrossed in a group reading likely also indicates a level of reading and listening proficiency and provides motivation for participating in more such readings.

#### Outcome: Greater Engagement with Books

As touched on above, reading a script out loud was an enjoyable and memorable experience for many participants. In all follow-up conversations, reading out loud and taking on a character to play was mentioned as an engaging exercise for learners, because it encouraged them to actively follow the story and take responsibility for their character. Overall, learners engaged enthusiastically with *Walk the Walk*, even those who were skeptical at first.

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The documents that we had access to did not provide much direct evidence regarding greater engagement with *other* books following participation in developing *Walk the Walk*. Which is not to say that it has not led to more engagement, merely that we were unable to track this impact. However, learner Danny had this to say about how his opinion of books was changed through the project:

At the start I didnae think so [that a graphic novel would be effective] - I mean, usually a book, you willnae find many young folk reading books, it's all on Facebook and that. So I didnae think it was the best idea, to be honest...When I started to read it and see how good it was going to make folk realise, like especially with families and that, that you get families in that situation, you can relate to it and maybe bring down a lot of situations. I mean there's a lot of hatred in families and it's actually, if you've noticed, there's a lot of families in Scotland that's going through that same problem as it is in the book, know what I mean? It's based on a true story, it's not made up or sci fi or that. - *Project Video*

Of the 10 tutors who had used the book and who responded to all the survey questions, 9 agreed that their learners enjoyed working with the book and 9 agreed that it helped literacy learners develop their reading ability.

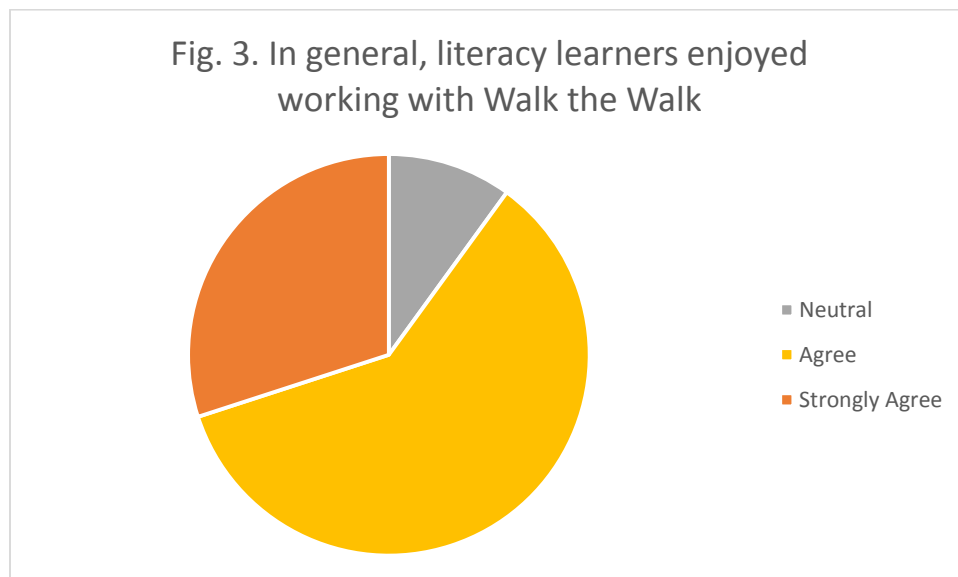
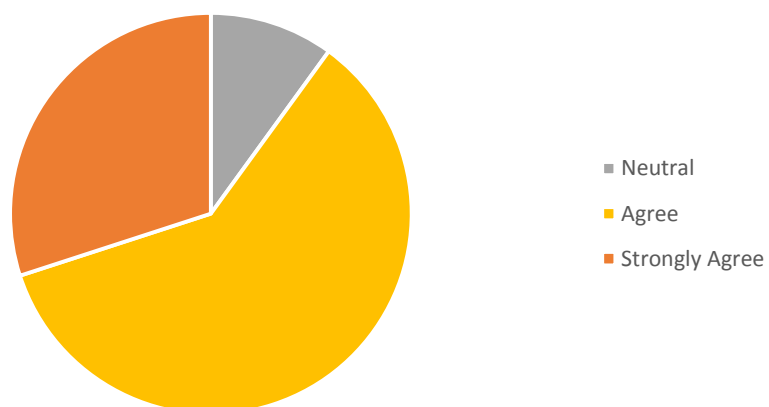
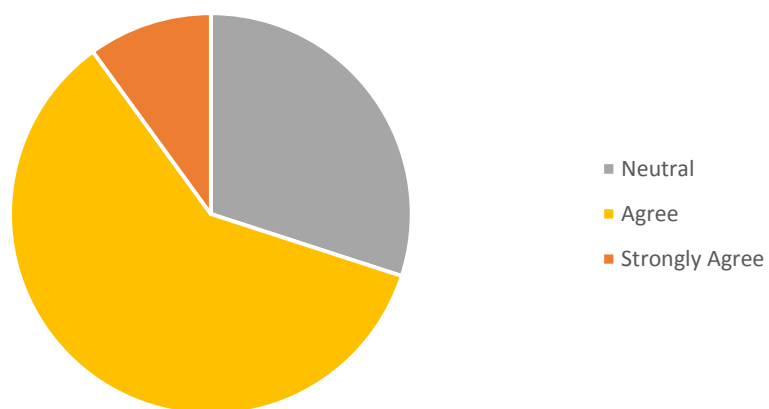


Fig. 4. Walk the Walk helps literacy learners develop their reading ability



Meanwhile, 7 felt that it did lead to greater engagement with books by their learners.

Fig. 5. Walk the Walk leads to more engagement with books by literacy learners



## Outcome: Increased Understanding of Sectarianism

Five groups did the "vote with your feet" activity at the very beginning of their first development session. These provide a snapshot of the groups' confidence levels and understanding around what sectarianism is at the very beginning of the book development process.

In figure 6, we can see that the majority of learners were in the middle or towards the not very confident end of the continuum when it came to knowing what sectarianism is. For tutors there is more difference across groups in relation to knowing what sectarianism is, with tutors of groups A and E feeling quite confident, a minority of tutors from Group B and tutors from Groups C and D feeling a little less confident.

**Figure 6. Confidence in knowing what sectarianism is.**

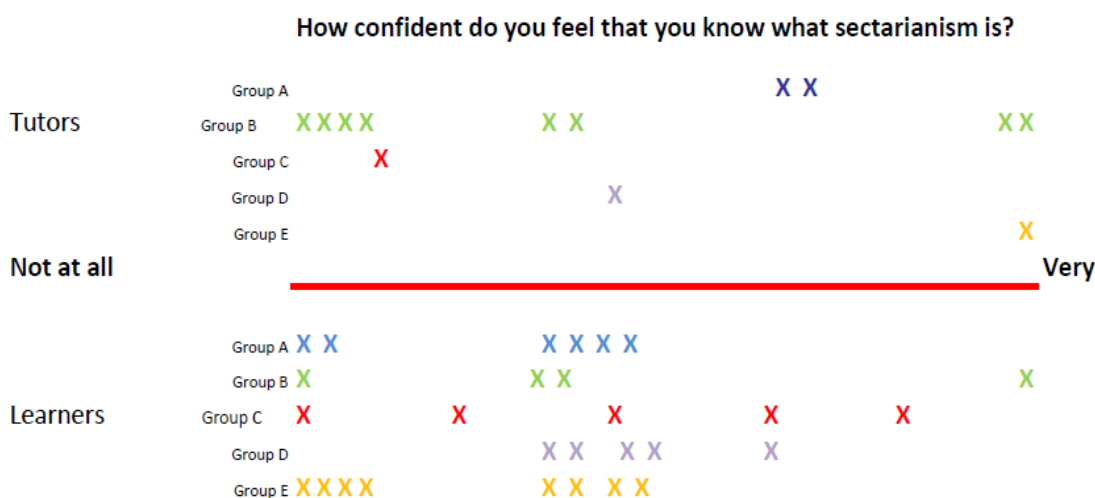
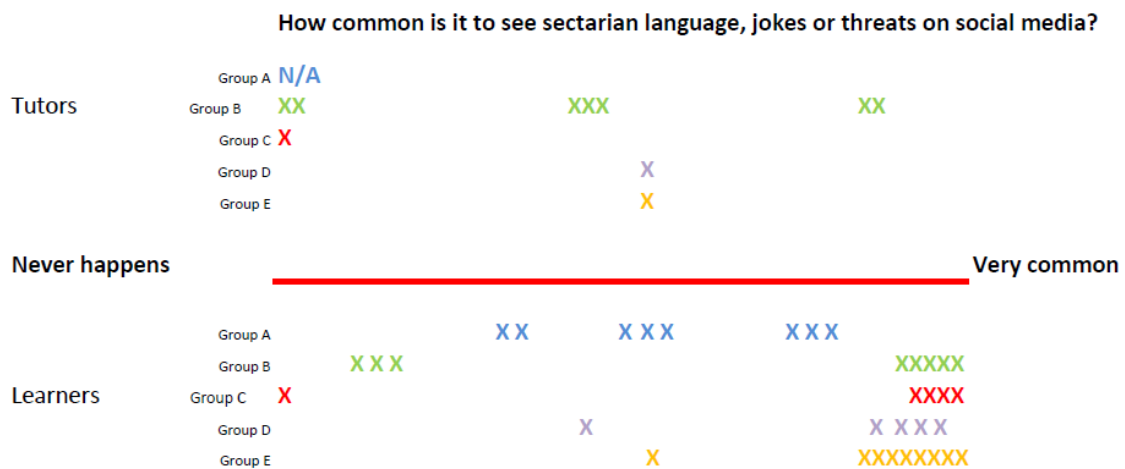


Figure 7 shows that for the most part neither tutors nor learners felt that their lives were impacted that much by sectarianism. The exception was the tutor for Group E, who felt that everything was impacted by it and the majority of learners in Group C, who stood on the impacted side of the room.



**Figure 7. How Much Does Sectarianism Impact Your Own Life?**

Social media was where learners tended to encounter sectarianism the most. In Figure 8, we can see that most learners found it very common to encounter sectarian language on social media. This was much less the case for tutors.



**Figure 8. How common is it to see sectarian language, jokes or threats on social media?**

Because of changing membership in the groups, no follow-up Vote with your Feet exercise was conducted as initially planned, so it is not possible to visualise a change over the course of their engagement with the project. However, the finding that most literacy learners in all five groups were not confident in their understanding of sectarianism is an important indication of the need to address this issue through literacy training in Scotland.

Discussion in the first development session reflected the vote with your feet results. One group of literacy learners with additional support needs was particularly unsure of sectarianism, spending most of the first session discussing racial discrimination instead. In other groups, more general forms of discrimination, such as antisemitism, inter-religious conflict and racism, likewise came up and were sometimes used interchangeably with sectarianism. The exception was the group that uses football as a theme with which to explore a number of topics, including sectarianism. Participants in this group were very knowledgeable about the subject from the beginning of SBT's engagement with them.

Some learners across groups had a general knowledge of sectarianism at the beginning, but were still working out the context or meaning of particular actions and symbols, as this interaction demonstrates:

*Learner 1:* Recently there was a Hearts and Celtic game which I was at. I can't remember the guy's name but he was - that's right, there was a flag, a big Celtic flag and it had a picture of a guy with a beret on and like curly hair and he was a freedom fighter for Columbia.

*Facilitator:* Che Guevara?

*Learner 1:* Aye, Che Guevara. Right. And I said to my dad, who's that? And my dad said. And I said, why have they got this guy if he's Columbian? And he went, he was a freedom fighter and that's what Catholics are, they just - they're freedom fighters, they believe that they should be in Scotland because Celtic Football Club was made in Scotland. But Rangers fans say the opposite and say they should go back to Ireland. But I just found it interesting why they would have Che Guevara who's Columbian.

*Learner 2:* But the thing is, Celtic Football Club is a Scottish football club. Yeah, it's got an Irish background but it is a Scottish football club.

As can be seen, this discussion of Che Guevara, Celtic Football Club and sectarianism was already increasing the shared understanding about the topic in this group. Such collective



pooling of understanding, facilitated by SBT leaders with a knowledge of the subject, happened in all groups. While it is difficult to pinpoint definite moments of individual learning about sectarianism in the transcripts - individual learners can be hard to identify making it impossible to trace them across sessions - we can infer from the increased knowledge in groups that this is happening for at least some of the learners. Moreover, tutors were mostly positive in their evaluation, indicating that they think participants increased their knowledge of sectarianism.

Both learners with previous knowledge of the issue and tutors contributed to the learning process of all group members in the literacy groups we followed. In the case of the group with additional support needs, one learner was actually motivated enough by the first session to find out more about sectarianism on his own initiative and then share that with the group:

*Tutor:* Yes. We had a big chat about [sectarianism], didn't we? But then I think actually your presentation kind of – was quite surprising to some of the group, do you think?

*Learner:* Yeah.

*Focus Group Facilitator:* What was in your presentation again?

*Tutor:* Yeah. The facilitator wasn't there, can you tell her roughly what your presentation had in it? Again, I know it's a long time ago.

*Learner:* It had the history of sectarianism, it had my personal comment on it.

*Tutor:* And I think it had – did it have – it had some stuff about Scottish football as well, didn't it?

*Learner:* Yes.

*Tutor:* And so they were – I think he just came in on the second session and said, I've prepared this - and they were all quite surprised by some of the information that was in there, weren't they?

*Learner:* Yeah.

Group discussion and exchange of opinions throughout the book development process helped participants gain knowledge about sectarianism and the symbols, language and behaviour associated with it. These two learners talk about what they gained:

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*Learner 1:* I don't think necessarily my ideas changed but I do think I got more information along with them through the project.

*Learner 2:* Yeah. Like what I sort of knew of initially was quite small but sort of discussing it with the other members and with the Book Trust, you sort of broaden it and you start to get a sort of fuller idea of what it is.

These two learners went on to say that in their group most people had been in the middle of the Vote with Your Feet exercise when asked about confidence in knowing what sectarianism is and in talking about it to other people. They felt that if they were asked to do the exercise again, they would now place themselves on the confident end:

*Learner 1:* I think just being given like a lot more information like I'm sure a lot of hard facts and examples then on a lot more varied examples, so to speak. That's kinda helped broaden my horizons, if you like.

*Learner 2:* I think being able to discuss it with people as well really helped cos like in sorta normal society, it's not – you don't talk about it normally. But with being able to talk about it, you sort of get more information and sort of different people's point of view on it.

As several participants in different groups indicated, sectarianism is rarely talked about in everyday situations, and so the workshops provided an opportunity to explore the issue in more depth.

*Interviewer:* OK. So before you engaged in that process, had you ever really had a conversation with people about sectarianism before?

*Learner 1:* Maybe. Stuff in school when it comes as part of the curriculum, things like that, yes. But not as much a kinda – just sitting there and something that came up in conversation.

*Learner 2:* Mm hmm.

Merely by providing the opportunity to have an open discussion of sectarianism in the context of the story and information provided by the book and SBT support materials, the *Walk the Walk* project has contributed to increasing understandings of sectarianism.

Of the 10 tutors who had used the book and completed the survey, 9 agreed that it helped learners develop in their understanding of what sectarianism is and all 10 thought it

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helped learners to develop their understanding of sectarianism's impacts.

Fig. 9. Walk the Walk helps literacy learners to develop in their understanding of what sectarianism is

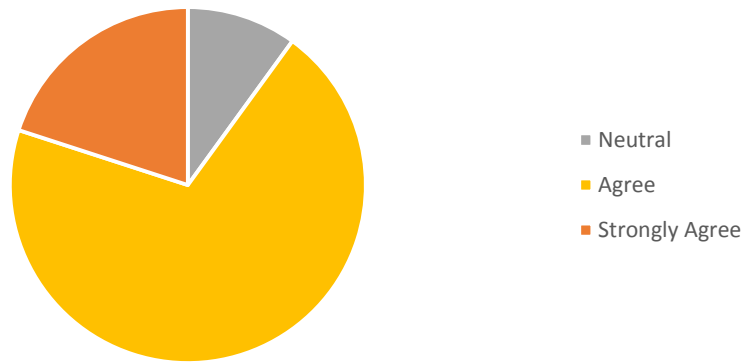
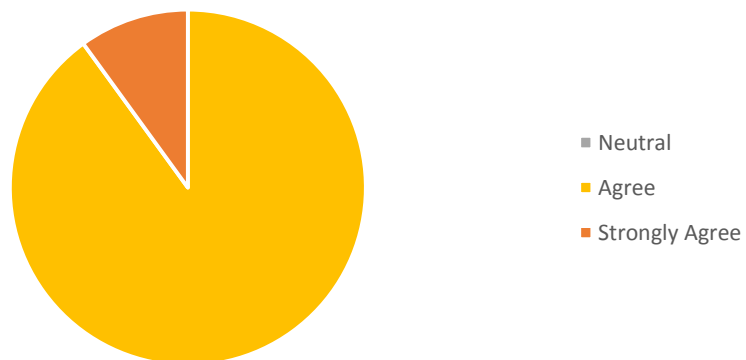


Fig. 10. Walk the Walk helps literacy learners to develop in their understanding of the impact of sectarianism



## Behaviour Change in Relation to Sectarianism

As discussed above, there is ample evidence that helping to develop the book increased at least some participants' understandings of sectarianism, encouraged a recognition of others' opinions and a reflection on learners' own experiences. For some learners, these changes led to changes in behavior. Participating in the development of the book encouraged some participants to speak out on the issue and even to challenge other people's use of problematic language or behaviour, as this tutor describes:

I wasn't there at the workshops, so I, in a sense, was seeing the aftermath or response to it and I think certainly the group became more aware of what they were saying and how they were saying it and the impact that that had on others. Now that could have been the fact that they were doing a citizenship class and that was the aim of that class anyway -- but I certainly think it was helped along the way by being involved in this project. ...that was a really good kind of response. That was one of the reasons that we were keen to be involved with this project -- is that that was kind of the message that we wanted and it did seem to get through, even for the students who weren't in the group, because the people who were in the group started to challenge some of the behaviours they were seeing, it kind of had a knock on effect, which was really quite interesting to see.

In another group, learners said that they would be more likely to speak up when confronted with sectarianism:

*Learner 1:* I think personally I'm kinda more inclined to talk about it now when things like it come up.

*Learner 2:* Fortunately enough, I haven't had to talk about it much cos it's not something I see a lot. But if I would see people talk – sorta reflecting it, I would sorta bring it up with them.

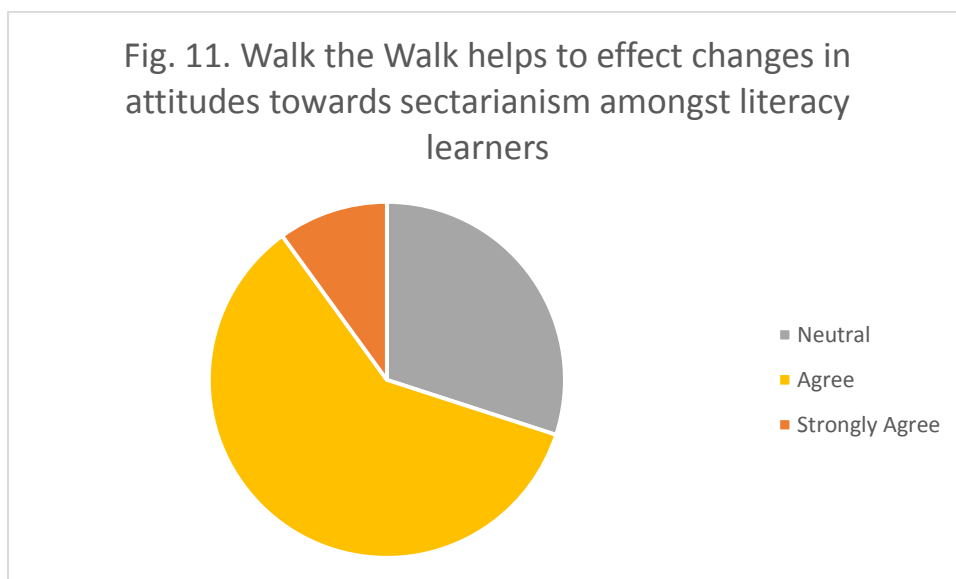
Another learner wrote to us letting us know that he had begun to talk about sectarianism online and to begin to explore anti-sectarianism activism:

Yes, I have found myself talking about sectarianism more on the online community. I have found out about various people who campaign against sectarianism.

Learners also reported taking the book home to share it with families and mentioning it

to friends outside of the group. By speaking out and sharing the book, the impact of *Walk the Walk* extends beyond the literacy groups themselves.

Seven of the tutors who responded to the survey agreed that it changed attitudes (although only 1 strongly agreed) with 3 staying neutral (see Figure 11).



### Summary of Learner Outcomes

Increases in understandings of sectarianism arose through group discussion that was stimulated either by the SBT facilitator, in the development sessions, or by literacy tutors making use of the book and support activities in actual usage sessions. The book often provoked factual questions, such as what does this word mean and/or why is associated with sectarianism. The ensuing group discussion (often with reference to the glossary included with *Walk the Walk*) would then provide an answer and context for that word.

As we have already discussed, the development process and the book itself provoked the sharing of personal stories related to sectarianism, these discussions also deepened understandings, particularly in intergenerational contexts. So some younger learners felt that they understood their parents and/or grandparents experiences a bit better.

In a sense, the SBT facilitators functioned a bit like experts in sectarianism during the

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development session, able to answer questions that tutors might not have been confident in addressing. The challenge will be for SBT to transfer such expertise through the support activities in the book and online and through training tutors directly. We now turn our attention to the impact of participating in this development project on participating tutors.

Outcome: Tutors Understanding of Sectarianism and Confidence in Delivering Material

As discussed in the section on Vote with your Feet above, groups differed widely in terms of their tutors' confidence in knowing what sectarianism is at the beginning of the development of *Walk the Walk*. Some tutors had personal experiences of sectarianism, a few had even run previous projects on the issue, but others were less confident in their knowledge of the issue. Responses from tutors regarding their confidence ranged from 'I've always felt comfortable talking about it because I grew up with it,' to 'This is something I've never really understood or felt comfortable with'.

One tutor reflected that although he was confident in his overall understanding of sectarianism, he wasn't sure about his young male learners' perspectives on the issue:

I know enough history to know where that comes from, so it wasn't, there wasn't an awful lot of ..., there was a few little facts that I learned about Celtic football club and how that had developed which I found kind of interesting, ... and it's not necessarily even a sectarian issue as such, it's just about, it's the context. It was little things like that, but other than that the things that I learned was more about how the group see the subject, and there was a range of awareness in terms of that.

This comment highlights an important aspect of tutors' understanding of sectarianism - namely an awareness of how their specific group will see and experience the issue. Depending upon the demographics of the literacy groups, tutors could find themselves either a generation older or a generation younger than some of their learners and in different social and economic circles. Therefore, understanding their learners' knowledge and experiences of sectarianism was an important part of developing tutors' confidence in delivering material on the subject to their groups.

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SBT offered continuing professional development workshops on *Walk the Walk* and its support activities to literacy learners in January and July of 2015. Feedback from participants in this CPD training was positive in relation to increased understandings of sectarianism and confidence in leading sessions on it.

For those with little prior knowledge of the subject, the CPD training session was especially helpful. One tutor commented that the CPD training helped her 'understand experiences some of my students have spoken about'.

Several tutors attending the CPD training session commented that they now felt more confident to lead discussions about sectarianism or other emotive subjects. This suggests that the CPD training is an effective tool and meets tutors' needs. In answering the question, "Have you learned anything from reading the book and/or completing the exercises?" tutors answered:

'A great deal in terms of 'springboarding' conversations about this difficult and sensitive topic. It has reinforced my confidence in talking about the issue, too'.

'This is something I've never really understood or felt comfortable with. I now feel I could 'run' a course/discussion group on.'

'Opened my mind to other ways of dealing with discussions about sectarianism.'

Other tutors benefited from encountering new techniques on how to run a session with their group. Several of them mentioned that reading a script with divided roles made them realise how they could create more engaging and interactive session for their learners.

As SBT has done its own evaluation of these CPD sessions, we will not discuss these further here, other than to say that there is evidence that the process, activities, book and CPD training increase tutors' understanding of sectarianism and their confidence in delivering material on the subject.

The 10 tutors who had used the book and had completed all sections of the survey were unanimous that *Walk the Walk* and the support materials had improved their confidence in working on the topic of sectarianism. Here is what 9 of them had to say:

More knowledge of subtle forms of sectarianism.

It was informative and the students responded to it.

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Brought a sensitive subject into light, only by discussing these issues can we develop as a society.

The supporting materials provided good exercises and conversation starters that the students enjoyed. The book on its own wouldn't have been sufficient especially if you were less experienced.

It discusses sectarianism within the contexts of family and community.

The manner in which the book and support materials are presented. However, many 'sectarians' don't see themselves as sectarian; which is still problematic.

With certain students yes it has. I was surprised that one of my younger students wouldn't even look at the book, whereas an older student (50s) really, really enjoyed the book and we were able to have a long discussion about sectarianism.

Although I previously knew what sectarianism was I would not have considered using it as a topic with my students and would not have felt knowledgeable enough to answer any questions. *Walk the Walk* and the workshop I attended have given me the knowledge and confidence to now do so

I found *Walk the Walk* helped greatly in opening up the discussion properly by showing both sides and how others from other countries viewed it and related it to their cultures.

There have been a lot of resources created that just don't grab young people's interest which can appear to be one-sided initially and readers immediately turn off before getting to the main message. *Walk the Walk* allowed both sides to air their concerns, what they were based on and offered serious and humorous solutions.

While the pre- and post- questionnaires were answered by different tutors, it is possible to see a positive trend in confidence. With almost all of the 10 tutors who answered these questions on the post-survey being somewhat to fully confident on these three questions. Looking back at the initial pre-survey, of the 15 tutors who completed it, only 2 were completely confident in knowing what sectarianism. None felt completely confident in answering questions or delivering material on sectarianism and 2 had no confidence in answering questions on the subject (compare figures 12-13, 14-15 and 16-17 below).



Fig. 12. How confident do you feel in knowing what sectarianism is (Pre)?

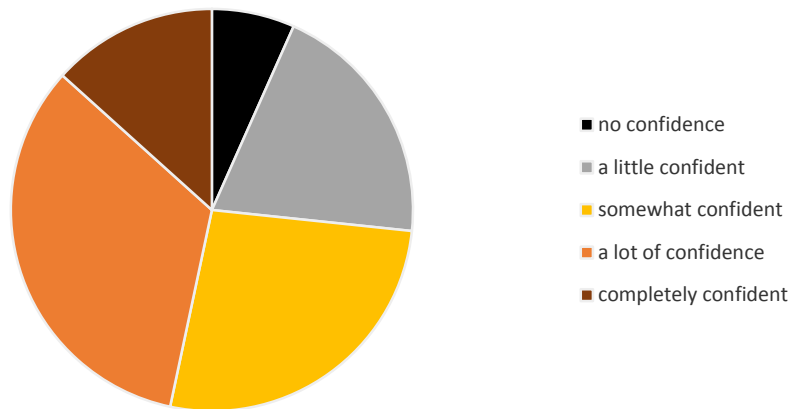


Fig. 13. How confident do you feel in knowing what sectarianism is (Post)?

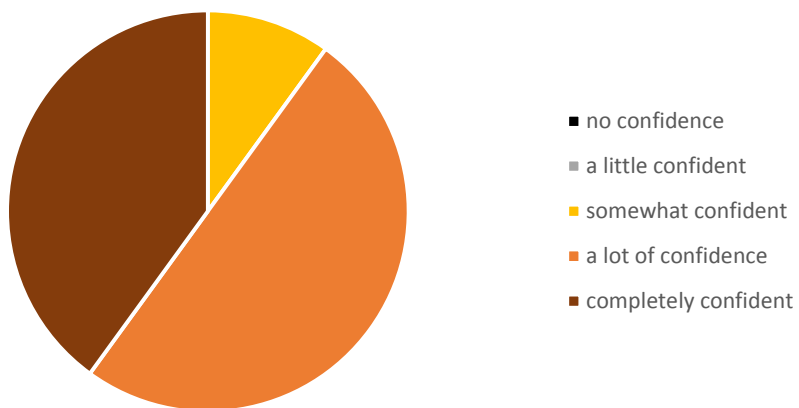


Fig. 14. How confident do you feel in answering questions about sectarianism from your students (Pre)?

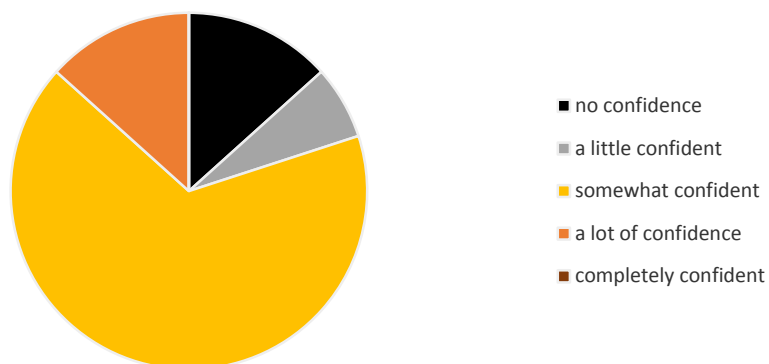


Fig. 15. How confident do you feel in answering questions about sectarianism from your students (Post)?

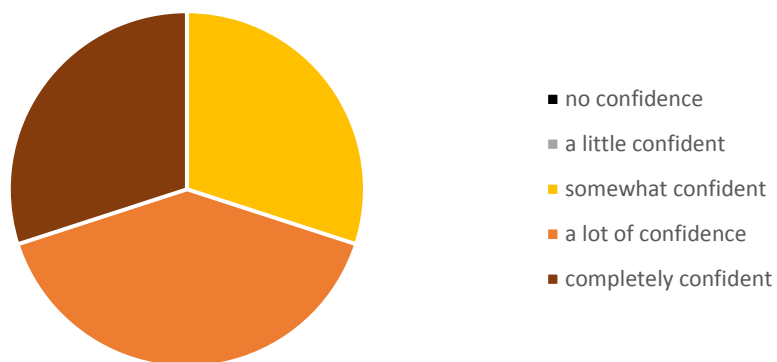


Fig. 16. How confident do you feel in delivering material on sectarianism to your students (Pre)?

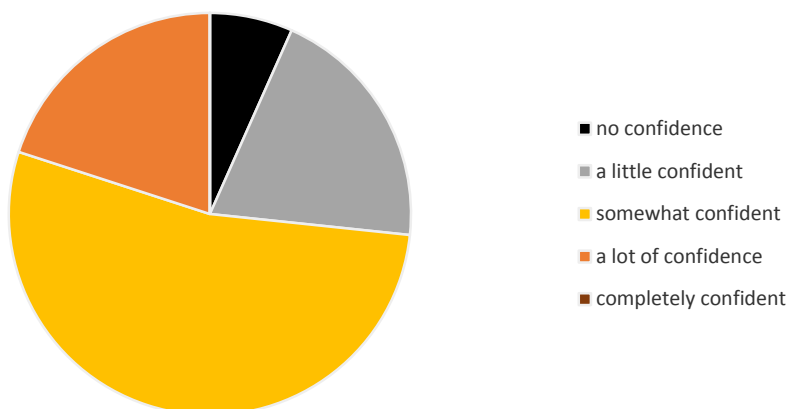
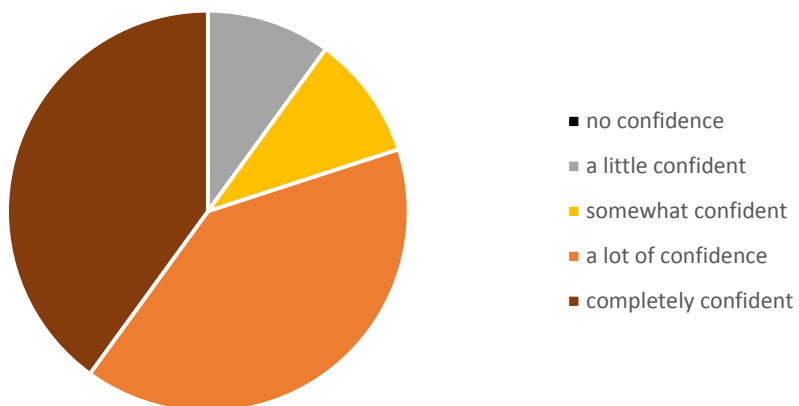


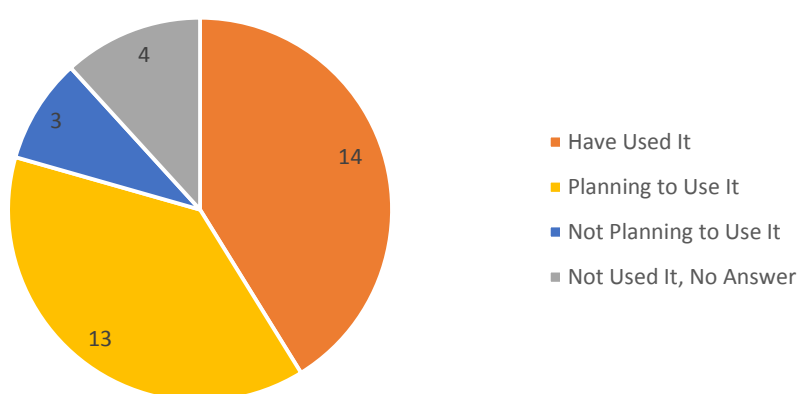
Fig. 17. How confident do you feel in delivering material on sectarianism to your students (Post)?



## Post-Development Use of the Book

Of the thirty-four people working for literacy organisations who responded to our follow-up survey, 14 (41%) had used the book and 20 (59%) had not. Of those who had not used the book, 12 (60%) reported that they were planning on using the book in the future, 4 (20%) said they were not planning on using it and 4 did not answer this question. Altogether, 27 out of these 34 tutors (79%) had either used *Walk the Walk* or were planning to use it.

Fig. 15. Usage of Book by Survey Respondents



The reasons why tutors had not yet used it included (16 responses were given):

- Not had a suitable learner or a suitable group yet (7)
- Not had a suitable occasion yet (3)
- Copies have been made available to individuals to read independently (2)
- Did not like the book (2)
- Not prepared yet (1)
- Budget cuts have led to service cuts (1)

Of those who had not had a suitable group or learner yet, 2 specifically mentioned that

they thought the book would be better pitched at adolescents rather than adults and 1 felt that their current group was too sensitive to deal with the topic. The others did not provide further detail. Of those who mentioned not having a suitable occasion, 2 said that they had it in mind and would use it if sectarianism or something related to sectarianism was brought up by their group. A couple of respondents are not working with groups at present, but have made the book available to individuals. One of these respondents reported that "I have handed copies to individuals whom I feel are affected by sectarianism".

Of the 16 respondents, the 2 who did not like the book and the person whose organisation has experienced budget cuts are the ones that are not planning on using the book in the future. Of those who did not like it, one simply stated "we did not find it helpful", the other "prefer[s] to work with more pleasant material". Of the 14 tutors who had used the book, 10 (72%) completed the survey. Their responses have been included in the sections above.

#### What Survey Respondents Liked Best

Nine tutors provided feedback on what they liked best about *Walk the Walk* on the follow-up survey. This feedback fell into two categories (1 tutor provided feedback on both).

##### **Feedback on the support activities:**

The fact that there were supporting activities to support the book was superb!

I liked that there were so many supporting materials. They seemed to be activities that engaged the students.

The supporting activities encouraged discussion and thinking about local neighbourhoods.

##### **Feedback on the book:**

Easy to follow.

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Easy to use good graphics

Its play format allowed everyone in the group to play a part, which made the storyline and message come alive.

The manner in which it is set out.

I've only used the text with one student and he found the layout easy to read, he liked the graphics and it did indeed prompt discussions.

It encourages involvement and learners quickly get into character

I loved the fact that *Walk the Walk* used humour and included different cultures for students to compare what happens here with other countries. The writers weren't afraid to include realistic situations which students could relate to and appreciated. The script allowed the students to be themselves when acting it out.

One of the survey respondents thought that the book was a bit long and that breaking it down into chapters might have been useful. However, she went on to write: "but the students enjoyed it so much they just didn't want to stop and it was 20 minutes past their lunch hour before we knew it."

#### Reasons for not using the book (yet)

There appears to be different ways of working with literacy training. Some of the survey respondents seemed to take a learner-led approach, whereby they would only use a resource if that topic came up organically in their groups. While this means that having resources on topics of social relevance, such as sectarianism, will be highly valued, it also means that it could be a long time before they get used, depending on the group context.

Conversely, one of our focus-group members expressed a concern that the book can be too close to home for people who have experienced sectarian violence and aggression; likely for older people. However, no one in any of the groups we consulted, including many older people, mentioned that they had experienced sectarian violence perpetrated against them directly, so we are unable to comment on this.

As with anything, taste is personal and whether people will respond well to the subject matter and engage with the book will also depend on individuals in the group and on the tutor.

### Use of the book with those who hold strong sectarian beliefs

All the groups that SBT worked with had clear policies regarding respecting diversity and exhibiting tolerance and for the most part participants did not exhibit sectarian attitudes during the development sessions. Therefore, we have almost no direct evidence to draw on with regards to the impact this book might have on those who hold sectarian beliefs.

The one potential exception was a situation which a tutor mentioned regarding a participant who would not engage with the *Walk the Walk* process. This participant appeared to hold problematic views related to sectarianism:

And there were a couple of people in, em – while you were sat in the, the meeting room back there who I've tried to – but – and this guy's a big Rangers fan and he doesn't see sectarianism. I said, well, you can go and sing your Celtic songs to show them that it doesn't exist and he went, phew, over my dead body...And he just, he just wouldn't get involved, eh, and he's a lovely, lovely fella, but he, he just doesn't...

When asked directly whether they thought the book would help change attitudes amongst those who hold sectarian beliefs, participants at our focus groups were generally negative. Some felt that people who subscribed to sectarian views and behaviours would be unlikely to read the book. They felt that sectarian views are established in childhood and early teen years and suggested that the book could be used with older children and teens in order to prevent them from becoming sectarian. One group suggested that it be put on as a play for this age range.

In support of these ideas, the one group who did feel it could make a difference was a group of young adults, one of whom said the following at the book's launch:

I feel like it will actually show people what they actually do when they go to games and they realise in the book that could actually happen to one of their loved ones and maybe they will take time to think what they're gonna do when they go to situations like that and actually say, if anybody, like the next one that does it'll actually stop them instead of getting joining them.

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This young participant suggests that by taking sectarianism from the abstract into the realm of the personal, the issue is made tangible and identifiable, and can be related back to personal circumstances.

### Other Potential Audiences and Uses

A number of people suggested using *Walk the Walk* with drama groups and/or staging it as a play. One tutor said that he'd given a copy to a friend who was using it in a primary school setting. Someone else thought it would be a great example of Scottish Literature for a secondary school class. Peer education was also suggested as potentially able to make use of the books, as were ESOL classes. Latterly, we did attend an event of an ESOL group who had used the book and had a positive assessment of it. Finally, one tutor was planning on using the books with a group of men in rehab, with the thought that sectarianism has links to drinking culture. She also suggested it might be usefully used in prisons.

As already mentioned, in several groups, the story became a springboard for discussions about wider issues of discrimination, intolerance, bullying, identity and belonging, often within the context of an increasingly multicultural Scottish society, and so could be used for these subjects as well.

### Walk the Walk Support Materials and Activities

To further our evaluation of the supporting materials made available on the SBT website, we compiled information from Google Analytics. Not surprisingly, visits to the site peaked in January, when the books were delivered and the first round of CPD training was offered, indicating that it is in fact literacy groups in Scotland who have been accessing the site (see Table 1).



**Table 1. The number of unique page views over time (top) and the number of people entering the site through that page (bottom) for the four most visited pages.**

	TOTAL	January	February	March	April	May	June	July
Walkthewalk homepage	683	250	133	103	49	60	45	43
	356	141	71	56	14	36	16	22
Download Page	264	134	49	26	15	11	18	11
	93	65	18	3	1	2	1	3
Tutor Support Notes	158	58	33	22	14	12	8	11
	20	6	6	2	3	3	0	0
About the Book	153	87	23	11	12	7	8	5
	49	32	6	2	4	1	4	0

*Note: a "unique page view" only records one page view per visitor per visit even if the visitor has returned to the page more than once.*

As Table 1 also shows, most people are coming to the site via the project's homepage, with a few also coming in through the download page and the About the Book page. With only 97 having come into the site from a range of other pages during these seven months.

"What's in a Name", "About the Author", "The Glossary", and "The Tutor FAQ" were the four most frequently accessed activity pages. However, some of the least accessed activities are also available in the book itself, such as "What Happens Next" (see Table 2). As Table 3 indicates, the book was downloaded 263 times during these months.

**Table 2. Total unique page views over seven months for each of the activity pages of the website.**

	TOTAL
Learner-Activities	77
What's in a Name	61
About the Author	60
Glossary	51
Tutor FAQ	48
Songs and Chants	43
You are Here	38
Belonging and Identity	24
All Colours	24
What Happens Next	23
Social Media	23
Then and Now	22

**Table 3. Total clicks to pages or downloads over seven months**

	TOTALS
Download	263
Learner-Activities	213
Adult-learners/walkthewalk	65
You are Here	64
What's in a Name	58
Social Media	58
Songs and Chants	53
Belonging and Identity	40
What Happens Next	39
Tutor Support Notes	26
Then and Now	21
All Colours	17
About the Book	9
About the Author	8
Glossary	8
"/walkthewalk"	8
Tutor FAQ	5

The follow-up survey asked participants for feedback in terms of other supports,

resources or trainings they might like to have to support them in delivering material on sectarianism. Three respondents reported that they thought the resources and activities provided were "really quite comprehensive and suitable". One other person thought "More material like the book would be useful". Two people mentioned videos and an "open forum". Finally, one thought that this version was more for young people and that a version specifically for older learners would be good. This latter opinion is not supported by our research, which found that older learners appeared to engage with the book as much as the younger ones did.


### Feedback for Future Projects

SBT are aware of the great amount of fluidity in membership of adult literacy groups. However, as the fluid nature of these groups has come up a number of times in this evaluation, we feel it is important to record in this report that this needs to continue to be taken into account in the design and evaluation of future projects with this demographic. More often than not, learners will not attend all sessions, and/or might have moved on by the time assessment starts. The way in which SBT approached the development of *Walk the Walk* accommodated changes in groups by organizing sessions so that they could stand alone. We approached this evaluation on a group, rather than individual, scale to take this issue into account.

The learner-led nature of some of the literacy work that is going on in Scotland also has implications for future projects. While our survey did not have a high response rate, and cannot be generalized, within the group of tutors who did reply, a large number of tutors had not used the book six months after it was distributed, although most were intending to use it. Because learner-led literacy work is driven by what is brought up in discussion by learners, resources such as *Walk the Walk*, that deal with topical issues are more likely to be of use.

Moreover, learners involved in developing *Walk the Walk* liked the social awareness aspect of it and were interested in having similar books on other relevant topics. Two topics that were specifically mentioned were books to raise awareness around issues concerning the elderly and concerning dyslexia.

The book clearly triggers people to think about incidents from their own life. To make the most effective use of such opportunities for reflection, the challenge for facilitators appears to lie in encouraging learners to think back and forth between their lives and the book. In the data we had access to, we sometimes observed a tendency for learners to remember something from their own lives and to simply recount that memory rather than bringing it directly into critical dialogue with the book. Encouraging a more sustained critical dialogue between personal experience and the stories in the book is something that CPD training could perhaps emphasise, highlighting the SBT "Follow-up discussion" questions at the back of the book as an example of good practice in this regard.



## Discussion

### Summary of Outcomes from the Book Development Process

Overall, the SBT book development process impacted positively on learners' self-confidence in participating in group discussion and in reading. In some cases this even translated into greater confidence in discussing sectarianism outside of the group and in challenging other people's language use and behaviours.

Being involved in something with a real-world impact felt quite meaningful to many participants and tutors, as did the SBT consultation process and the experience of being listened to. However, some individuals and groups did not understand the full implications of their participation until they met the author and/or illustrator and were provided with drafts for feedback in the second session. This indicates the value of participants continuing to be involved through multiple sessions when possible.

The activities used in the development sessions enabled and supported learners to recognise that others have different perspectives and to reflect upon links between their own perspectives, experiences and opinions and those of other people in the group and of the characters in the story. Reading the book out loud and providing feedback on drafts of the book were particularly valued activities that seemed to have the greatest potential to impact positively on learners. According to tutors, learners enjoyed reading the script together and enjoyed developing characters and being engaged in a creative process. These activities were associated with a deepening recognition of others' perspectives. This was the case for tutors as much as for learners. Also, reading out loud proved to be an engaging way to get learners to interact with a book and did help learners in developing their reading ability.

Initial understandings of sectarianism were quite mixed both between and within groups. The SBT process emphasised learning through sharing and both learners and tutors who knew more about the subject shared their knowledge with their groups. Learners and tutors both reported that the group discussions had increased their knowledge and

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understanding around sectarianism.

Tutors also reported increasing their understanding of sectarianism, perhaps most importantly coming to understand better their learners' experiences and perspectives in relation to sectarianism, and a greater confidence in leading work on the topic.

Sectarianism is a topic that sparks strong emotions and opinions in most people. While tutors might be cautious about using highly emotive topics in literacy groups, we found that strong feelings led to a great deal of energetic engagement in discussion by learners. In the groups we worked with, the emotions were managed well by the facilitators, the tutors and the group members themselves. The groups that SBT and ourselves worked with were fairly well established, although group membership in some was quite fluid.

None of the outcomes listed by SBT are achievable once and for all, but rather are skills that continue to develop over the course of a person's lifetime. While many participants already demonstrated self-confidence, an ability to empathise and reflect, and a range of informed opinions on and understandings of sectarianism at the initial consultation session, others did not. SBT's book development process offered supportive opportunities for people to practice skills related to these outcomes and tutors did report noticeable changes in some participants, particularly around participation in group reading and/or discussions.

### Summary of Outcomes from Working with the Book

All the groups we consulted had read at least parts of drafts of the book in a group setting, which is how the book is designed to be used. These groups would have read the book with the background of the development sessions that preceded. As the focus of our evaluation was on the development process, we only attended and recorded one session in which there was a "cold" reading of the book. Even in this session, both the tutor and one learner had participated in a pilot reading earlier. Therefore, our findings in relation to the book and the book-reading process may not be entirely relevant for groups who received the book without having any relationship to its creation. However, the survey of tutors who had used the book

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does support what we found in our focus groups and through our analysis of the development material, providing us with reasons to believe that the book, book reading format and activities do contribute many of the same things as the development process. The one major difference being the increased confidence book development participants experienced in contributing to creating a book that would be widely distributed throughout Scotland.

### What aspects of the book and activities worked well?

Pulling together data from all the sources we had access to, we found that there were several aspects of the format and use of the book that were key to engaging readers and helping them to develop their communication and literacy skills:

- Script format that is read out loud and discussed
- Providing pictures
- An interesting story that is "realistic" and has relatable characters
- Use of humour
- Use of vernacular language

While most of these have already been touched upon in the sections above, they are discussed in greater detail in the sections that follow.

### Script

Groups were unanimous in reporting that what they liked best about the book was that it was written as a script. Learners enjoyed taking on a role and reading it out loud. Tutors felt that reading a character encouraged learners' participation at a deeper level and had better results:

*Male Tutor:* Teaching young folk in that kinda fashion is a lot better because they're all interacting instead of just having it on a Powerpoint and reading...because they need to follow it. Like if it's a Powerpoint, we just sit and stare and then -

*Female Tutor:* Mm hmm. And fall asleep.

*Male Tutor:* --nothing would be going into their head but if they all get a character, they need to follow the whole thing, listen to it and then read when it's their bit. So they're following the actual full story.

The script format encouraged participation and interaction, while also creating a certain flexibility for tutors to assign roles or for learners to choose to read a part with a lot of lines or a little:

*Female Tutor:* They were all fighting over who was gonna be who in it (LAUGHS)...And the thing is, some of them--like in that [group] there's a girl that doesn't speak at all, you know. So see if somebody doesn't want to speak at all here you are, the very [character] for you. (LAUGHTER) So it is quite – and I mean, I think there's one of the parts they don't say an awful lot, they've maybe got 2 or 3 bits, you know, so if somebody doesn't want to say a lot, that's their wee bit, you know, a few wee bits and that's them quite happy (LAUGHS). But they've participated in it.

It also encouraged interaction and active learning because learners had to take on a character and follow the story all the way to the end. As mentioned above, learners enjoyed "playing" a character through changing their voice and reading words as if they were their own. Survey respondents also mentioned the script format as a positive element.

## Graphics

Many people mentioned liking the graphics and having a curiosity about the illustration process. Similarly to the story, the graphics were experienced as relatable. Many people across groups remarked that the pictures looked like they were set in Scotland, particularly in the West of Scotland or centre to west of the Central Belt. One learner commented that even the colour palette was Scottish. The two two-page spreads were mentioned by learners as being particularly eye-catching and as helping to interest them in reading the book in the first place.

Some tutors felt that the graphic elements helped give confidence and support to the reading, as this group of tutors discusses:

*Female tutor 1:* I loved the pictures.

*Male tutor 1:* Even I liked the pictures (LAUGHS)



*Female tutor 2:* And I think the young people liked the pictures as well.

*Female tutor 3:* ...they absolutely can relate to it because of what it looks like.

*Female tutor 1:* Mm hmm.

*Female tutor 3:* So because of how that's done and the graphics that's in it, they will relate more to that than if you said, here's your scripts (LAUGHTER) or here you go and it's a big pile of words

*Male tutor 2:* Aye. For the west of Scotland, we don't read books without pictures. (LAUGHTER)

*Male tutor 3:* It's good cos it's done in a style like a comic which is good cos a lot of people prefer that while [Female tutor3] was saying instead of having a script, the idea of a comic's good to have.

A focus group with learners said much the same thing:

*Learner 1:* There's a lot more illustrations than I'd thought initially.

*Facilitator:* Is that good, bad or indifferent?

*Learner 1:* I think it's different, it's good.

*Learner 2:* It's good. It'll keep you more – it's more engaging than pages and pages of just kinda script.

*Learner 1:* It helps you sort of visualise the scene.

The graphics were seen as particularly useful for one of the literacy groups, which works with students with learning disabilities as one of their tutors explains:

Definitely, the format I like. It suits our students who have mixed abilities and support needs, which actually is very unique. Usually I find I have to add my own pictures to words, or add words to pictures, so to have that ready-made is great.

Having pictures that entice readers to read the story, that provide visual cues for the words, that break up large blocks of text and that are accessible helped *Walk the Walk* engage readers and support them in reading. It was helpful for those with additional support needs but was not seen as patronising or juvenile by any of the other readers. Survey respondents also liked the use of graphics.

Everyday story with humour

The narrative structure of *Walk the Walk* encourages learning and reflection not

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through lecturing ('how you should or shouldn't behave'), but by setting out a story and showing what can happen - giving learners a chance to identify with characters and reflect on what they would do in this situation. Through engagement with the story, learners are encouraged to reflect on their own attitudes and values and on what they would do in the same situation.

We have already discussed the importance that was placed on the accessibility and relatability of the characters and pictures. The accessibility of the plot was also valued by learners and tutors. Making it about everyday matters enabled participants to relate to the characters and the subject matter:

What helped was that the subject matter allowed it to be about fairly everyday things, about families and friendship and that kind of thing. So in that sense, they're linked. Maybe some subjects would have been a lot harder to sell, in that sense. - *Literacy Tutor*

This view was shared by other tutors:

It's such a heavy subject... Whereas this [book] maybe – it doesn't lighten it by any means, you know, by any imagination but it makes it accessible in that way, cos it's a story built around people, characters that you can get involved with, that you can get into it more perhaps, maybe understand – you know, get the same understanding as reading the heavy text but in a different way and there's more emotion involved and a bit of empathy perhaps with – maybe with each and every one of the characters in that way, which maybe you wouldn't get from a heavy text or from somebody teaching you about it because you're still getting their point of view... whereas when it's read out it's your experience reading it with the characters - *Literacy Tutor*

There was one survey respondent who disagreed with the more general opinion that the story was realistic. In answer to "what could be improved" s/he wrote,

I wasn't a fan of the story itself although most of the students enjoyed it. I didn't feel the story was realistic. I grew up in Glasgow and have personally experienced Sectarianism. I find sectarianism to be more subtle and random. *Walk the Walk* was very clichéd...

However, this tutor still strongly agreed that it helped learners develop in their understanding of sectarianism and also agreed that it helped learners in understanding sectarianism's impacts and that s/he would recommend *Walk the Walk* to other tutors.

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The intergenerational aspect of the story was appreciated by at least one of the groups. In this group the age difference between the youngest and oldest members was probably about 50 years.

Overall, the narrative makes the topic more accessible and engaging through basing it on everyday activities (other than the two acts of violence) set in everyday Scottish locations. Humour was mentioned as an important part of engaging students and lightening the topic both by focus group and survey participants. Especially since this is a heavy topic, making the story about everyday matters and leavening it with some humour personalizes the issues and creates the possibility to identify with characters and follow an interesting storyline, rather than just reading facts.

#### Language

The last aspect of the book to be discussed is the language. There was a bit of controversy over the language, with some learners and tutors wondering if including vernacular words might be an obstacle for literacy learners. Certainly, many learners struggled with the vernacular language and the glossary was hailed as being a central support in this regard. However, there is no evidence of learners being put off of reading the book because of the language and many said that the language contributed to the relatability and believability of the book and the sense that it was an everyday Scottish story, as this learner commented:

This is what he was saying, a lot of ties to the kinda west of Scotland, Glasgow area, so having that dialogue again ties back to how it could be like a real story because that would be the dialogue you'd expect them to use. You wouldn't expect them to say, 'oh pardon me, you've interrupted my wedding'.

The script-graphic novel hybrid format and the storytelling dimension with identifiable, relatable characters, pictures and language caught people's interest and helped them to relate their own lives to the stories. It also supported them with reading. It suggests that difficult subjects can be presented to learners through narrative and visual means. Using emotive and potentially controversial subjects in this way can actually be helpful with literacy learning, as learners appear to be highly engaged by and willing to discuss such matters.

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## The Utility of Narrative Resources

Experiments in psychology have demonstrated that reading well-structured, well-written stories facilitates readers' reflections on their own personal experiences in ways that can lead to a shift in understanding of and in feelings related to that experience. These shifts can exceed what is accomplished by the provision of factual information. In *Proust and Squid*, psychologist Maryanne Wolf observes that this personal reflection is made possible in the short gap of time between the comprehension of a word and the reading of the next word. She recognises, however, that in order to have this gap for reflection, readers must have fluent literacy skills. In fact, Wolfe argues that one of the most important reasons for literacy training is to enable more people in society to have the reflexive space to mentally engage with their own experiences while reading.

*Walk the Walk* is aimed at literacy learners, readers who by definition are not fluent and therefore may lack the mental space in which to reflect while reading. As we have demonstrated, the SBT development process, the book itself and the support activities do provide at least some literacy learners with greater confidence, they engage learners in reading and do appear to help them improve their reading. Moreover, through developing literacy skills using a script that is read out loud in a group and then discussed in that group, this process actually models the reflective reading process Wolfe outlines. The script format of the book, and the group reading style that it was created for, provide spaces for reflection as readers read to each other out loud and then discuss the book afterwards.

Working with a graphic novel that is in script form is something SBT has developed independently. However, the joint script reading process has much in common with what is termed Readers' Theatre in North America. Readers' Theatre projects are often used in secondary schools, but have also been used in Higher Education, in museums, in medical education and health communication, as well as being staged for entertainment. Studies of Readers' Theatre projects have shown that reading a script out loud in a group enables

participants to discuss difficult and even taboo subjects safely in the third person. Participants often project their own thoughts and feelings onto characters in the script, enabling them to take a "third position". By doing so, they can talk through their opinions and experiences without having to commit themselves personally to them. This can help people avoid becoming defensive, sticking to an opinion simply because they've voiced it as their own, and allows them to work through their associated emotions at one remove.

The findings from our evaluation of *Walk the Walk* resonate with the research done on Readers' Theatre and point to the utility of using this process with adult literacy learners and on the topic of sectarianism.

Sectarianism and other forms of discrimination are fed by a lack of empathy with diverse others, a reluctance or inability to reflect critically on one's own experiences and interpretations, and the silencing of groups of people throughout society. For people in the middle ground, particularly young people, who might be unaware of the actual context of football bigotry and religious prejudice - it can raise awareness and educate. It can also possibly have an impact on wider issues of stereotyping and intolerance between groups as there are similar mechanisms at work in a wide variety of contexts related to discrimination.

While the group targeted for this book was adult literacy learners, it is important to note that many of the outcomes discussed in this report are skills and understandings that fluent readers could also benefit from developing further and SBT might consider distributing this book beyond the initial demographic.

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## Suggested Reading

### Research into Reading:

Maryanne Wolf (2008). *Proust and the Squid: The Story and Science of the Reading Brain*. Icon Books: Cambridge

Keith Oatley (2011). *Such Stuff as Dreams: The Psychology of Fiction*. John Wiley and Sons.

### Readers' Theatre:

M. Kaye (Editor) (1995). *Reader's Theater*. Newark, NJ: Wildside Press.

Joanne M. Curran (1996). Peace Pilgrim: A Reader's Theater Approach to Peace Education. <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED413296.pdf>

Jan Maher (2006). *Most Dangerous Women: Bringing History to Life Through Readers' Theater*. Heinemann: Portsmouth, NH, USA.

M. Cueva (2010). Readers' theatre as cancer education: An organic inquiry in Alaska awakening possibilities in a living spiral of understanding. *Journal of Cancer Education*, 25(1), 3–8.

Bonnie Slade (2012). "From high skill to high school": Illustrating the process of deskilling immigrants through reader's theatre and institutional ethnography. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 18, 401–413.

Alette Willis et al. (2014). Engaging with a history of counselling, spirituality and faith in Scotland: A reader's theatre script. *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling*, 42 (5), 525-543.